

REMARKS

Claims 2-4 and 7-21 are pending in the present application (“Application”). The present Office Action allows claims 9-21, rejects claims 2-3, 7, and 8, and objects to claim 4. The Applicant appreciates the indication by the Examiner of allowance for claims 9-21. By the present amendment, claims 2 and 4 are canceled, and claims 3, 7, and 8 are amended. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Application in view of these amendments and the following remarks.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 2-3, 7, AND 8 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(B)

The pending Office Action rejected claims 2-3, 7, and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being assertedly anticipated by Eigner, U.S. Patent No. 6,065,224 (“Eigner”). While the Applicant believes that Eigner fails to anticipate these claims, the Applicant elects to traverse the rejection by canceling claim 2 without prejudice. The rejection based on claim 2 is therefore moot.

On April 19, 2006, the undersigned spoke by telephone with the Examiner to discuss the pending Office Action. The undersigned proposed amending claims 3, 7, and 8 to make them dependent on the allowed claim 21, instead of the rejected claim 2. Because claim 21 was allowed and no additional amendments were made to claims 3, 7, and 8, the Examiner indicated this amendment would be acceptable. Claims 3, 7, and 8 have been so amended and are therefore in condition for allowance.

II. OBJECTION TO CLAIM 4

The pending Office Action indicates that claim 4 contains allowable subject matter when combined with independent claim 2. Claim 4 was objected to, however, as being duplicative of claim 21. Claim 4 has been canceled thereby rendering the objection moot.

III. CONCLUSION

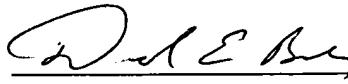
Claims 9-21 of the application have been allowed. For at least the reasons set forth above, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 7 and 8 are in condition for allowance. The Applicant therefore requests that the present Amendment be entered and that the Application be allowed and passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

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Respectfully submitted,

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